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## THE ELEMENTS OF A CONSTRUCTIVE AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

BY W. MORGAN SHUSTER,

Washington, D. C.

The subject of this discussion is one on which I have very definite convictions. It by no means raises an academic question. Our relations with the other nations of the world are of vital and material interest to every inhabitant of this country. We have sailed out of the comparatively calm seas of our foreign relations of twenty years ago. Serious problems confront us on many sides.

Since I feel earnestly upon this subject I shall speak earnestly, and if to anyone present I shall appear to touch upon matters of party politics, I crave their indulgence, because I do not intend to speak in a partisan spirit.

The foreign policy of a nation having a representative form of government should be the accurate expression of the collective conscience of the people. Autocratic governments are in a different situation.

In the United States the vast development of a free press, the large number of public-spirited societies, the system of open debate in Congress, all afford unusual opportunities to either the government official or the private citizen to gauge public sentiment on any important question. It is the privilege and the duty of every citizen to take part in the formation of a sound popular sentiment in any matter involving the honor, the prestige and the welfare of his country.

But there are some obstacles to the practical working out of this idea. Even with a representative government like ours it is impossible for the citizens at large to express in a formal manner their views and wishes concerning any emergency which may arise, however momentous. The polls cannot be invoked even in the gravest situation. Thus it may occur—and this is a serious defect in the actual practice of theoretically popular government—that a President or Congress, in entire good faith, may in a sudden international crisis pursue a course diametrically opposed to the conscience and judgment of a vast majority of the citizens. Fortunately such instances are not likely to occur.

But even if the citizens at large were able to vote on some specific policy in our dealings with another nation or nations, would they be able to do so, at short notice, with calmness, impartiality and knowledge of the real factors involved? I think not. The greatest drawback today to the attainment of civilization's principal goal, universal peace and justice, is the imperfect development of the individual conscience on broad international questions. As individuals we are still bitten by a hundred vanities which to us obscure the merits of any such question. Race-pride, aimless indulgence in patriotic fervor, the inherent lurking dislike for foreigners which has persisted to this day, the spirit which fans each member of a large mob to a fanatical state which, alone, no one of them could possibly attain, the belief that national conscience should not necessarily be as sensitive as individual conscience—something of all these things holds back each nation in the world in its natural *rapprochement* with the other.

It should, therefore, be the aim of statesmen to educate their countrymen along the broad lines of modern diplomacy. By modern diplomacy I mean the school which is slowly but surely displacing the adherents to the former system of deceit, subterfuge, evasion and trickery, which made the title "diplomat" a by-word with the masses.

In the United States the problem of creating and establishing a constructive foreign policy is especially difficult. Let us consider what elements such a policy should contain, and then discuss the possibility of attaining them. Some experience with the law has taught me to hesitate at framing definitions. But it seems clear to me that no foreign policy of ours, or of any other nation, could be termed "constructive" unless it should be based on certain obvious and fundamental principles.

A constructive foreign policy must have permanency and continuity. It must be a guide to our citizens in dealing with other nations, and to the other nations in their dealings with our government and our citizens. Therefore, in the United States, a foreign policy must be non-partisan; it must not be framed in a spirit of domestic politics, nor ever be made the instrument of party strategy. This is vital, since it is clear that, with the changes every four years in our executive branch, and the possibility of even more frequent changes in the legislative branch, there can be no continuity if our foreign relations are to be made the subject of party advantage.

To accomplish this result it is necessary that we should teach a

new definition of patriotism. The present conception of that word is too much bound up with the historical achievements of mere military success. Respect and encouragement should be given to love of country, but the wonderful emotional appeal which is made to the sense of nationality should be enlisted on the side of humanity and justice. Real patriotism demands that national honor shall be placed above national welfare.

If any conflict should arise between national duty and national welfare, we should first fulfill our obligations as a nation, and then adjust, as fairly as may be, our internal questions and the losses growing out of them. For example, I would rather see my government pay \$100,000,000 a year subsidy to our coastwise trade than to be even suspected of violating or evading a treaty stipulation.

It must be remembered that a nation which lowers its prestige in the eyes of the world places a stain not only on each of its living citizens at the time the offense occurs, but also upon millions of unborn citizens whose future government will be dealt with in the light of past actions.

So far, I have mentioned elements of a purely general character which should help form a foreign policy for the United States, but there is a long list of specific points which cannot be safely ignored.

The foreign policy of the United States up to the present time, so far as there has been any at all, has consisted of sporadic asseverations of the Monroe Doctrine. Washington appealed to his countrymen to avoid entangling alliances. In so far as making treaties of offense or defense is concerned, that advice has been kept. But other circumstances may impose upon a nation risks and responsibilities quite as great as such documents of alliance.

We have entanglements in the Orient, in the Pacific, in the Caribbean, and, if we would be consistent, as far south as Cape Horn. We have somewhat lightly assumed a quasi-protectorate against the great military powers of the world in behalf of some twenty nominal republics, many of which are in reality monarchies or oligarchies with only the barest forms of democracy. It is useless to attempt to soften this fact. If the Monroe Doctrine means anything to the world today it means that the United States must, on proper demand, stand sponsor for the acts, debts or any other obligations incurred by any one of the present or future nominally sovereign governments in South and Central America. This is a thoroughly

entangling alliance, except that the other parties are in no way entangled by it. If any "subject" of the Monroe Doctrine acquiesces in the stand or action taken by the United States in its behalf, all is well and good; if it does not, it is in the same situation as if the doctrine did not exist and the United States sought to meddle in its affairs.

I believe that a constructive American foreign policy demands that we should deal with every sovereign nation in the world, large or small, on terms of absolute equality. The justice of a nation's claim to sovereignty should not be tested by the number of ships or men which it can muster, nor should our attitude, as one of the present-day world powers, be in the faintest degree altered by either the strength or the weakness of the nation with which we are dealing. Any taint of opportunism in our external relations could not fail to lower our prestige as a nation and diminish our power for good in the world's affairs.

We should regard it as a paramount national duty to observe strictly the spirit of all our treaty obligations, with large countries or with small. If a question arises as to the exact meaning of such an instrument, we should, if unable to adjust the question by diplomatic exchanges, agree to arbitrate the point and to abide loyally by the decision. We should exact similar treatment by other nations in their dealings with us. Some years ago we grossly violated a long-standing treaty with a friendly but minor Latin-American nation. We did so by force and fraud. We have been asked by that nation to make amends or, if their form cannot be agreed upon, to arbitrate the question. We have done neither thing so far, but there are certain negotiations in progress. No really constructive foreign policy can countenance the commission of an injury to the feelings or the welfare of a friendly nation without the fullest reparation being offered and made by the offending party. A nation which is not big enough to make amends for a wrong done to another nation is no more civilized than is the man who injures another by accident, but refuses to apologize.

We should continue to do everything possible to encourage the formation and employment of arbitral tribunals and procedure, not only by proposing or acceding to such a system in cases of questions involving ourselves, but by sending representatives to form a part of such tribunals whenever so requested.

In order that the national government of the United States may

act with proper authority in its dealings with other nations, there should be a constitutional amendment effecting the complete submergence of the theory of state's rights and sovereignty in so far as they might come into conflict with the treaty-making power of the federal government. Until this shall be done, we will continue to be in the ridiculous and anomalous position of having to explain to foreign nations that we cannot maintain our treaty obligations to them because of the action or attitude of some state government. The absurdity of this situation becomes more apparent when we reflect on the fact that if any state of the Union should be attacked by a foreign power, it would become the absolute duty of the national government to protect the state—in other words, an attack on any state would be an attack on the United States, but the international obligations assumed by the United States are not necessarily binding upon each state.

Last, but not least, it should be a vital part of our constructive foreign program to create and maintain a highly trained, non-political, non-partisan diplomatic and consular service. The arguments and the prejudice in certain quarters against this plan spring from a narrow ignorance which it is a disgrace to our national intelligence to allow to influence us. Today, more than ever, each nation, in its manifold and complicated relations with the others, springing from political, financial and commercial rivalries of constantly increasing importance, has need of highly competent representatives abroad, not only as channels of communication, but as advisers to the home government. No nation of the slightest importance in world affairs is as backward and as short-sighted as is the United States in this respect. We at times seem to be proud of our shortcomings in this matter. The American people need for their foreign representatives not only men of good manners, and of some knowledge of the world beyond that acquired in the pursuit of their local career, however brilliant, but men who have made a study of international law, of history, of the political alliances of the world, of the natural and inevitable tendencies and trends of the principal nations, and of the laws and customs governing international finance and trade. No man, be he inherently ever so shrewd, can, without this special training, have the poise and self-control necessary to acquit himself with credit when pitted against the trained minds of the statesmen who direct the foreign offices of the important nations of the world.

The consular service is not less important. Every commercial nation but the United States recognizes this fact. It would be passing strange if our commercial affairs were so different from those of any other country that we could afford to entrust them to inexperienced hands.

Our foreign policy should naturally take special heed of our peculiar position in the western hemisphere. We are dominant among the Latin-American nations purely because of our size, our wealth, and our armed forces. We are not dominant because we are regarded as particularly just or generous in our dealings with them; nor because of any similarity of fundamental social institutions. We are apt to think that the Latin Americans are more Americans, as we ourselves understand that term, than Latins. I believe that the contrary is the case. It is a mistake to suppose that because in the superficial forms of their governments many Latin-American countries are like the United States, their people are similar in their social, political, commercial or ethical viewpoints. The great majority of them have a distinctly Latin education; their mental process follows more closely that of Europe; they are by blood, tradition, financial relations, trade routes, and in some cases in actual distance, nearer to Europe than to us. Any sane American foreign policy should adjust itself to these facts, and not start out on a false hypothesis.

President Wilson, in a speech at Mobile on October 27, 1913, addressing the diplomatic representatives from Costa Rica, Bolivia, Panama, Peru, Brazil and Argentina, made a declaration which, for its boldness of expression and high statesmanship, deserves to become one of the axioms not only of American foreign policy, but of that of every truly civilized nation in the world.

He said: "I want to take this occasion to say that the United States will not again seek to secure one additional foot of territory by conquest."

The authority of a President to speak for, or bind, the American nation in such an affair may well be questioned, for Congress may declare a war of conquest at any time and direct the President to wage it, but his enunciation of this view as a principle of American statesmanship is beyond all cavil.

The history of our annexation of some of the territory now constituting the United States proper has been questioned in strict

ethics, but our actions were at least on a plane with the international standards of those times, in addition to the fact that the land was really needed for the proper development of the American nation. But commencing with the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands, and passing to the conquest of Cuba, Porto Rico, Guam and the Philippines, and the forcible separation of the state of Panama from the friendly republic of Colombia, we find that our motives and standards, however unselfish and noble they may appear in our own eyes, are still subject to the gravest question in the minds of the peoples of the rest of the civilized world. Whether realizing it or not, we were giving to the world, and especially to Latin-American nations, a horrible example of that same "land-hunger" which we claim for over ninety years to have prevented Europe from gratifying at their expense.

President Wilson's words anent the securing of additional territory by conquest were, therefore, peculiarly timely and appropriate, and they should be proclaimed on every possible occasion and with all obtainable authority in our diplomatic exchanges with Latin-American countries.

The President, in this same speech, however, went further, and in so doing he gave a remarkable example of the state of "mental guardianship" which those who subscribe to the bundle of declarations now known as the Monroe Doctrine are apt to feel toward all other western nations.

He said: "States that are obliged to grant concessions are in the condition that foreign interests are apt to dominate their domestic affairs. Such a condition of affairs is apt to become intolerable. *And it is emancipation from this inevitable subordination which we deem it our duty to assist in.*"

Now this is sheer idealism and dreaming. In enunciating a principle of this nature the President went beyond the confines of statecraft, and sailed away over the seas of fancy.

Under no previous construction of the Monroe Doctrine have we attempted to say what concessions should or should not be granted by any Latin-American nation. The Lodge resolution adopted by the United States Senate in the summer of 1912 as a result of the Magdalena Bay incident was aimed only at the acquisition of certain concessions by foreign governments. Nowhere, so far as I am aware, has there been any attempt by even the most ardent Monroe



doctrinaire to assert that the United States possesses the veto power over all concessions sought to be granted by nations in the western hemisphere. Furthermore, most of the nations of Latin America have always been, and are today, unable to obtain foreign capital except by means of concessions. They do not, as a rule, grant them by choice, but through necessity. To say to such nations that they should not grant concessions, but rather "invite investments" of foreign capital, is a mere question of language, and is analogous to telling a man who is starving to death that he should not pawn or sell his watch.

Lastly, even were it possible by mere persuasion to induce Latin-American nations to cease granting concessions to foreigners, the question arises: under any other system how would the necessary capital for their development be obtained? European bankers would probably refuse to furnish it without some adequate security, and practical experience has absolutely demonstrated that American capital will not go there even on the favorable terms which provoked this utterance by President Wilson.

I cite this case as a fair instance of what, in my opinion, a constructive American foreign policy ought to avoid. It is one of the many unauthorized attempts at political guardianship over smaller western nations which arouses against the American people a very keen resentment. We must be sure of our neighbor's willingness to have us meddle in his private affairs before we venture to do so, by word or deed, even though our intentions be of the best and most unselfish.

On the other hand, in this same address, the President used language which might well be placed at the top of the stationery of our state department: "It is a very perilous thing to determine a foreign policy in terms of material interests. It is, indeed, a degrading thing."

The United States may well follow that rule, and it may properly use such friendly influence as it can exercise to "see that from no quarter are material interests made superior to human liberty and national comity," but it should be remembered that the American people neither hold any divine commission to right the wrongs of the world, nor are they so free from doubt and danger in their own internal affairs as to be able, wisely, to devote their budding energies and resources to galloping up and down the world's highways with glistening buckler and gleaming sword.

Not as a specific foreign policy, but in the realm of international ideas to be given our moral support, we might well class the theory of a present-day "balance of territory," to be established throughout the inhabited world. We have seen much of the "balance of power" in Europe. It has always seemed to me a most unstable thing, but a balance of territory would be but a recognition by the family of nations that sovereignty in a people should no more depend upon the extent of their military and naval resources than does the right of an individual, in any civilized community, to liberty and the protection of the laws depend upon his physical strength.

The greatest obstacle to the fixture of sovereignty and territorial limits as they exist today is a fatuous tendency towards over-centralization of political control. Trade, finance, increasing population in the older countries, the principle of the "white man's burden," all seem to whisper it. Some nations pursue this policy for a "place in the sun;" others have stopped at no pretext and have shrunk from no crimes, however shocking, to fling further afield their flag and sovereignty. Yet, in any truly permanent arrangement of the world's political units, all government must take serious heed of, if not indeed actually pause at, certain racial, climatic and geographical lines of natural demarcation. No government can successfully withstand the test of time and changing social conditions unless there is at least a potential homogeneity among its people. The limitations on empire-building are distinct and inexorable. At these natural barriers must cease the existing trend of powerful nations towards concentrating under their political aegis all the weaker states and peoples which may come within their grasp, whether the relationship may take the forms of colonies, dominions, protectorates, suzerainties or spheres of influence. Failure to recognize this fact will only prolong the political unrest of the world and take heavier toll of humanity in general.

Many will say that this is idealism. It may be so. But if the American people, in their dealings with other nations and races, cannot rise to this plane, shall they not at least hold it up as a standard, as a serene guiding-star of policy in moments of storm and crisis when the public mind is inflamed by the heat of controversy or the fires of racial passion?

Three general reasons occur to me for which one nation may ordinarily intervene in the affairs of another: first, in the protection

of the intervening nation's citizens or their property, if either are jeopardized; second, to stop a wanton shedding of blood; third, on the broad grounds of altruism, sometimes called a "duty to civilization," and, in the Orient, "the white man's burden."

As to the reasonable and disinterested exercise of the first prerogative, there can be no just complaint. The direct collection of international debts by force in the last resort will continue to be necessary until some international bailiff shall be created for this purpose. Any other system would but invite fraud on the part of administrations temporarily in power in any debtor nation. By common acceptance it is the right of a nation to protect its nationals from violence or injustice. In connection with this a very delicate question arises. It is the right of individuals to trade in most foreign countries. It is also the admitted policy of most nations to foster their trade with other countries by all legitimate means. But what are legitimate means? Is, for instance, the exaction of any form of trade or tariff concessions by political pressure on another government a legitimate act? If not, how far may a friendly government go in the endeavor to promote its foreign commerce, and widen the field for its bankers, manufacturers, engineers and contractors? There is no standard at present in such cases, and the decision must be left to the foreign offices of the governments involved.

As for the second reason for intervening in another nation's affairs—to stop wanton bloodshed—it is a highly dangerous policy. Suffice it to say that it should be indulged in only as an exercise of what may be termed the international police power, and then only when the leading nations of the world are agreed that no other course remains open.

The third reason—altruism—is one which has recently been advanced by the United States not only as a justification for forcible intervention in the affairs of a theretofore friendly power, but for retaining indefinitely under the American flag territory obtained by armed conquest or ceded by a treaty of peace. At what profit or loss this task has been performed is a reasonable subject of inquiry.

A constructive foreign policy must take notice of the fact that international politics are intimately connected with international finance. Theoretically, perhaps, this should not be so, but the relationship is even closer than in the case of domestic politics and finance. It may be possible for the United States government to hold itself

clear of any influence in its foreign relations by financial problems, but no one nation, however powerful, can suddenly change the conduct of all other nations. The foreign policy of the United States in this respect is therefore compelled to choose between following more or less settled lines of action and standing strictly alone, at whatever cost to its bankers and commerce generally. The latter course would be difficult. The former course may not be idealistic, but the chasm between idealism and finance still exists. On finance must fall the opprobrium and criticism engendered by the intense struggle of nations and individuals to amass wealth. International policies should not be shaped to mercenary ends, but unless a government shall coöperate with its international bankers, its efficiency and influence will be greatly reduced. Other nations, which follow a more material course, will make loans on profitable terms, and the American investors in foreign securities (never numerous and always timid) will be content with domestic securities and enterprises. Since the United States still has need of all its surplus money, no immediate harm will result, but profitable foreign investment fields are not opened up in a day, and our present policy should consider the future. Furthermore, a certain proportion of foreign securities held in any country is a steady factor in times of local money disturbances.

A constructive foreign policy must determine a line of conduct for our government in the matter of encouraging the investment of American capital in undeveloped foreign nations. For our government to do nothing would be, in practice, equivalent to putting a veto on all such investments, since capital will not go as private loans to foreign governments unless there is some promise or guarantee from its own government that good offices will be extended in the case of default of payment or breach of faith. To ask American investors to make loans to any governments smaller or less stable than the leading nations of Europe except upon some such assurance of official support at home would only encourage purely speculative financing, and place responsible bankers under a handicap which would inevitably drive them from any competitive field. Thus, if a group of American capitalists were bidding against a European group for a loan to be issued by a Latin-American nation, the fact that our government would not guarantee to extend its good offices in case of necessity, whereas the governments of Europe would do so, would

effectually bar American capital from the field, even though there were not other inherent handicaps which render real competition with the European money markets along these lines practically impossible.

In conclusion, I desire to advert to a very live issue on which our government seems to have no very clearly defined policy. I refer to the Mexican situation. Many plans have been suggested, but of late some prominence has been given to the idea of what may be termed a "Pan-American intervention." I believe that any attempt at joint intervention in Mexico by several South American nations, acting with this country, would result most unfortunately. The plan is impracticable, and if attempted, would result in endless complications in the future. The mere broaching of it through any official channels would be sure to arouse in Europe further resentment against the policy and attitude of the United States. The exclusion of the leading nations of Europe from the intervention would deprive the effort of exactly that crushing moral force which the united action of the leading powers of the world can always bring to bear. The Mexican dictators and people would still feel that they were fighting only the American nation, nominally assisted by some small South American powers, which in all matters would have to be completely dominated by the United States.

Argentina, Brazil and Chile have been mentioned as proper participants with the United States in bringing about public order and restoring normal government in Mexico. Each of those countries has its own peculiar and difficult problems to solve. No one of them has any substantial political, commercial or financial interests in Mexico. Their participation in armed intervention in the latter country would, therefore, mean to the European powers which are materially and vitally interested in Mexico but another test of how far the Monroe Doctrine is to be tolerated. It might well be that just some such instance as this would be selected by those powers as the starting point for a coalition in defiance of that doctrine. England, France, Germany and Spain would have a strong case upon which to rest their challenge of our exclusive policy. Every precedent of international law would be with them. The lives and property of their nationals have been destroyed and are still jeopardized in Mexico. The United States would by its action be admitting the necessity for outside aid in restoring peace and order in Mexico, yet it would be

undertaking that task in a manner calculated to emphasize its suspicions of the good faith of leading European nations and thus increase the resentment which in certain quarters is already felt there.

It is illusory for the American people to seek to isolate the western hemisphere from the rest of the world. The whole tendency of the day is a closer relationship between all nations, races and peoples. This is the inevitable result of modern civilization, progress, world commerce and science. Any attempt to retrograde, to mark off and reserve continents for the exclusive political domination and commercial monopolization of any one nation, however powerful, cannot fail to evoke in other nations a feeling of resentment which will increase in exact ratio as the policy of isolation succeeds. Common sense, fair play and prudence all urge upon the American people a closer and more harmonious understanding with the leading European nations in the solution of the Mexican situation, and any suggestion having a contrary tendency is harmful, and even dangerous.